

Firewise USA – Action Plan

The Springs at Santa Rita HOA

Plan Outline:

Title/Cover Page:

- The Springs at Santa Rita HOA
- Plan Date: November, 2023
- Picture

Introduction:

- The Springs (*The Springs at Santa Rita HOA*) was established on June 8, 1995. The Springs at Santa Rita is situated in the Sonoran Desert and is near the Santa Rita mountains and Santa Cruz River.
- Goals and Objectives of Firewise Action Plan:
 - It is our desire to become an active Firewise USA member. The Springs understands the value of protecting our residents and structures from the effects of wildfires. Further, we understand that by being a Firewise community we are helping our neighboring communities and Green Valley to be as safe as possible from a wildfire event.
- The Firewise Committee Members for the Springs are:
 - Bruce Grieshaber (Co-Chairman)
 - bgg3247@gmail.com
 - (315) 427-3045
 - George Anderson (Co-Chairman)
 - Georgeanderson8257@gmail.com
 - (541) 729-8257



Community Location:

- The Springs is located at: **951 W Via Rio Fuerte, Green Valley, AZ 85614**

Ownership:

- Number of parcels, structures, and residents.
 - 442 Residential Units.
 - 1 Commercial Building on 2 parcels.
 - 1 Equipment Shed.
 - One Entry Gate, Clock Tower, and Office structure.
- The Springs is bordered by the following:
 - To the North is The Greens at Santa Rita Springs HOA.
 - To the East is Torres Blancas Golf Club, the Santa Cruz River, Anza Trail, and Pecan Orchards.
 - To the West is I-19 and the I-19 Frontage Road.
 - To the South is a Tucson Power Transmission line and substation as well as open Pima County Park Land.

Topography:

- The Spring's community is built on relatively flat ground and does not have any significant Topographic or slope features that would have substantial impact on wildland fire behavior within the Subdivision or areas immediately surrounding the community. Slopes within The Springs are generally 10% - 20% of slope, The

Spring's Community consists of 443 homes, and these homes have concrete or stone patios, with wooden deck porch patio covers, however this community does not have decks that overhang Slopes.

Vegetation:

- The vegetation at The Springs is primarily native Sonoran Desert plants and trees. Our common areas are landscaped with cactus, including Prickly Pear, Ocotillo, and Saguaro, Yucca, Agave, with Mesquite and Palo Verde trees. All common areas have a bed of ornamental rock that is gravel and small bolder sized. There is a 25-acre Nature Park on the southeast corner of the development. There is a one mile long, paved, walking path within the Nature Park. The primary vegetation in the Nature Park are Mesquite and Palo Verde trees with the occasional cactus. The groundcover in the Nature Park is various grasses. During times of heavy winter and/or early spring rain grass, and shrub increase significantly, then as weather conditions become hotter and drier this growth dies out and can become especially susceptible to fast-moving, wind driven, high intensity wildland fire. The land/ drainages adjacent to the community have become overgrown with thick vegetation and lack of separation between trees, brush/shrubs and grasses, contributing to a fuel load and ladder fuel effect along the edges of the community and immediately adjacent to undeveloped desert land with native vegetation.
 - The Nature Park is not irrigated. The Springs Grounds Crew, discussed later, monitors the height of the grass and maintains its height near the properties that abut the Nature Park. The Grounds Crew also removes dead tree branches and cactus debris from within the Nature Park.

Climate/Weather:

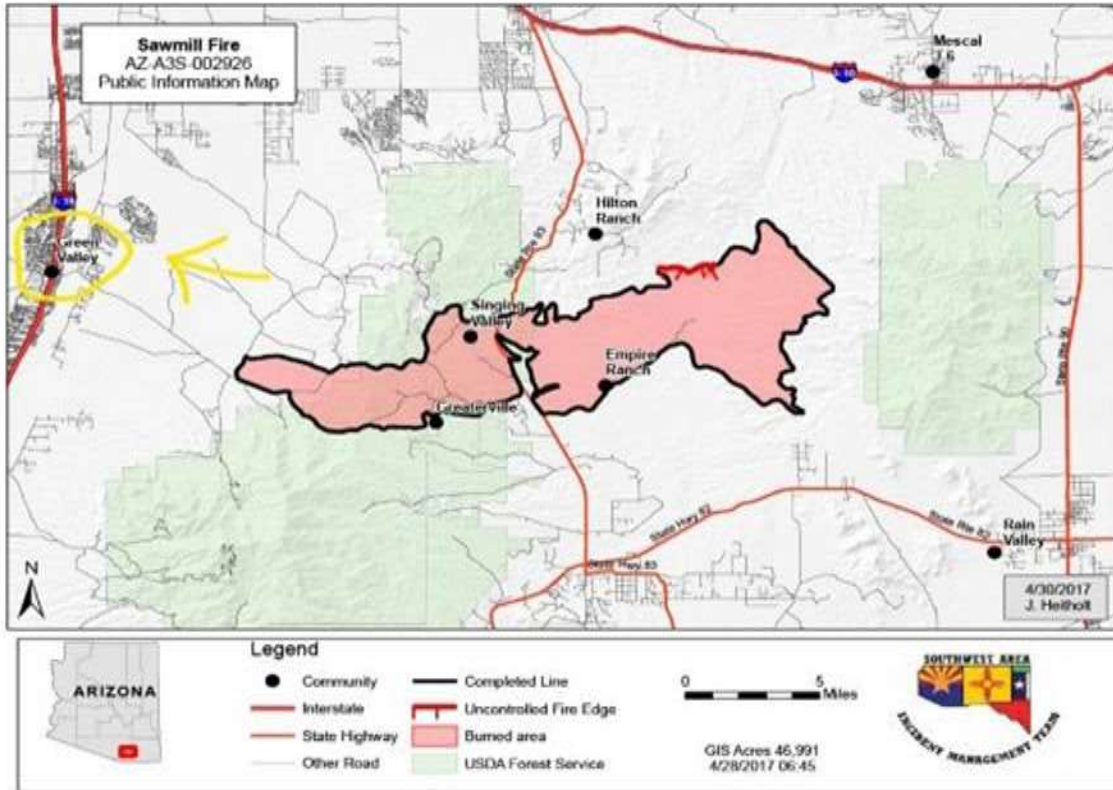
- The climate at The Springs is typical Sonoran Desert climate. Our hottest temperatures begin in June and continue through September. The Monsoon season is typically July through the end of August. During these months The Springs can see extensive rain fall and experience intense lightening and thunderstorms. Hailstorms are not uncommon. Additional periods of wet and/or extremely dry and hot weather will have an impact on the fire risk and fire behavior of the community. With the variable rain levels, the presence (or lack) of excessive flashy fuels will also have an impact on fire spread and intensity.

Wildlife:

- The Springs has many wildlife visitors that call our Nature Park and common areas home. Our vegetation attracts many bird species, both migratory and resident. It is not uncommon for us to have several nesting sites throughout the development each year. Our nature park is open to the Torres Blancas Golf Club and Anza Trail access. Through these pathways we have had Deer, Coyotes, Bobcats and many squadron of Javelina sightings within the development. A goal for us would be to maintain a safe and fire-free environment for these creatures. Wildlife is an important feature to The Springs, its management, and our residents.

Fire Regime and History:

- In 2017, Sawmill Fire 8 miles east of Green Valley which burned 46,911 acres.





Vegetation in the Intermediate zone. Keep separation of Trees/ Bushes around 5' along with grass trimmed.



Grass and brush in the extended zone/Undeveloped land. Recommend making contact with land owner/city to take steps to manage or maintain.



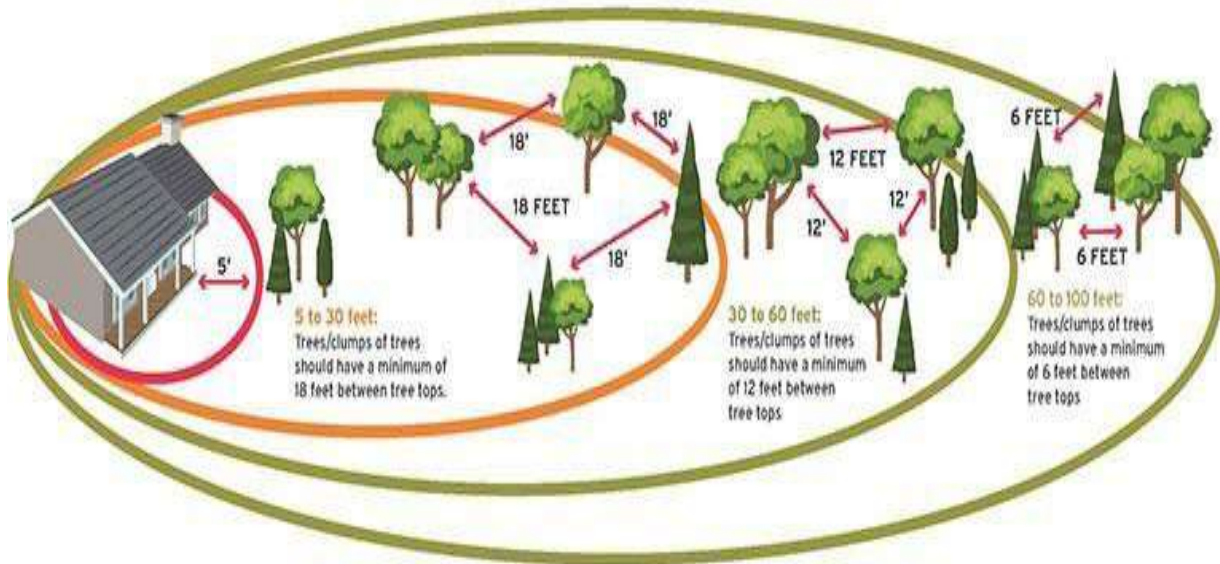
Vegetation in the Intermediate zone. Recommend keeping trees limbed up 5' also break up continuous Fuel/ i.e. brush, grass keep spacing between bushes 4-5'.

Recommendations

- 1) Continue to improve defensible space.
To increase your home's chance of surviving a wildfire, choose fire-resistant building materials and limit the amount of flammable vegetation in the three home ignition zones. The zones include the immediate Zone: (0 to 5 feet around the house), the Intermediate Zone (5 to 30 feet), and the Extended Zone (30 to 100 feet).

- 2) Keeping Buffel grass down by using herbicides to eliminate the grass to its roots and then removing the grass, plus manual removal of by volunteers during dormant times of the year.

TREE SPACING



Immediate zone

The home and the area 0-5' from the furthest attached exterior point of the home; defined as a non-combustible area. Science tells us this is the most important zone to take immediate action on as it is the most vulnerable to embers. START WITH THE HOUSE ITSELF then move into the landscaping section of the Immediate Zone.

- Clean roofs and gutters of dead leaves, debris and pine needles that could catch embers.
- Replace or repair any loose or missing shingles or roof tiles to prevent ember penetration.
- Reduce embers that could pass through vents in the eaves by installing 1/8 inch metal mesh screening.
- Clean debris from exterior attic vents and install 1/8 inch metal mesh screening to reduce embers.
- Repair or replace damaged or loose window screens and any broken windows Screen or box-in areas below patios and decks with wire mesh to prevent debris and combustible materials from accumulating.

Move any flammable material away from wall exteriors – mulch, flammable plants, leaves and needles, firewood piles – anything that can burn. Remove anything stored underneath decks or porches.

Intermediate zone

5-30' from the furthest exterior point of the home. Landscaping/hardscaping- employing careful landscaping or creating breaks that can help influence and decrease fire behavior.

- Create fuel breaks with driveways, walkways/paths, patios, and decks.
- Keep lawns and native grasses mowed to a height of four inches.
- Remove ladder fuels (vegetation under trees) so a surface fire cannot reach the crowns. Prune trees up to six to ten feet from the ground; for shorter trees do not exceed 1/3 of the overall tree height.
- Space trees to have a minimum of eighteen feet between crowns with the distance increasing with the percentage of slope.
- Tree placement should be planned to ensure the mature canopy is no closer than ten feet to the edge of the structure.
- Tree and shrubs in this zone should be limited to small clusters of a few each to break up the continuity of the vegetation across the landscape.

Extended zone

30-100 feet, out to 200 feet. Landscaping – the goal here is not to eliminate fire but to interrupt fire's path and keep flames smaller and on the ground.

- Dispose of heavy accumulations of ground litter/debris.
- Remove dead plant and tree material.
- Remove small conifers growing between mature trees.
- Remove vegetation adjacent to storage sheds or other outbuildings within this area.
- Trees 30 to 60 feet from the home should have at least 12 feet between canopy tops.
- Trees 60 to 100 feet from the home should have at least 6 feet between the canopy tops.

Community Infrastructure:

- The streets in The Springs are 28' wide. The paved area is 568,895 square feet. There are five (5) fire stations in Green Valley. Green Valley Fire District Station 153 is 3.3 miles from The Springs. Green Valley Fire District Station 152 is 5.4 miles from The Springs.
- There are two driving egress locations from The Springs. The first is through the main gates that allow two-way access to the I-19 Frontage. The I-19 Frontage Road runs north and south along I-19. There is an entrance to I-19 2.6 miles to the north and one 2.0 miles to the south.
- There are 34 fire hydrants within The Springs development.
- There are 3 drivable exits to the west, and 1 to the northeast.
- There are 2 walkable exits to the east.

Community Wildfire Protection Plan:

- The Springs is proud to have a dedicated Landscape Team comprised of resident volunteers. This team gathers each Tuesday and Friday throughout the year. The team is focused on maintaining the common areas, nature park, and street side vegetation and irrigation with the development for both safety and health of the vegetation itself. Last year this team provided 1600 hours of landscape maintenance to The Springs. It is this team that will implement our Firewise Protocol moving forward.

Community Accomplishments:

- Past hazardous fuel treatments

- All fuels, oils, and flammable items are stored in a self-closing, clearly marked, liquid fuels storage locker.
- The Landscape Crew's fuel containers clearly identify their contents and have safety nozzles.
- The Landscape Crew's work shed is locked to secure our fuels or flammable items.
- The Landscape Crew works 2 hours every Tuesday and Friday throughout most of the year. The crew size varies in volunteer numbers 6 to 8 volunteers each workday. Average 30 hours per week.
- The Landscape Crew applied 1600 hours to wildfire fuel removal and maintenance in 2022.
- Individual property Firewise assessments
 - The Firewise team will work with homeowners to ensure that vegetation within their property lines is compliant with the Immediate Zone recommendations.
 - Members of The Springs Landscape Team can assist homeowners, as needed, to meet the Immediate Zone recommendations.

Community Project Goals:

- **Future fuel/vegetation treatments**
 - The Springs Landscape Crew is dedicated to maintaining a sufficient defensible space within the nature park, and common areas of our development. Through our association with Firewise USA we plan on providing educational opportunities to our residents to help them understand the importance of maintaining defensible space within their individual properties. We foresee extending the role of the Landscape Crew by developing Firewise Ambassadors who can both identify potential defensible space encroachments for residents and assist the resident in mitigating the identified issue.
- **Future Firewise event plans**
 - Annually, to take place in January when more residents are present.
- **Future Firewise education or notification plans (e.g., newsletters, presentations, door hangers, etc.)**
 - Community Firewise education through offering Firewise property vegetation assessments.
 - The Springs Vice President will be responsible for sending annual safety, egress and protocol, notices to residents.
- Community clean up days

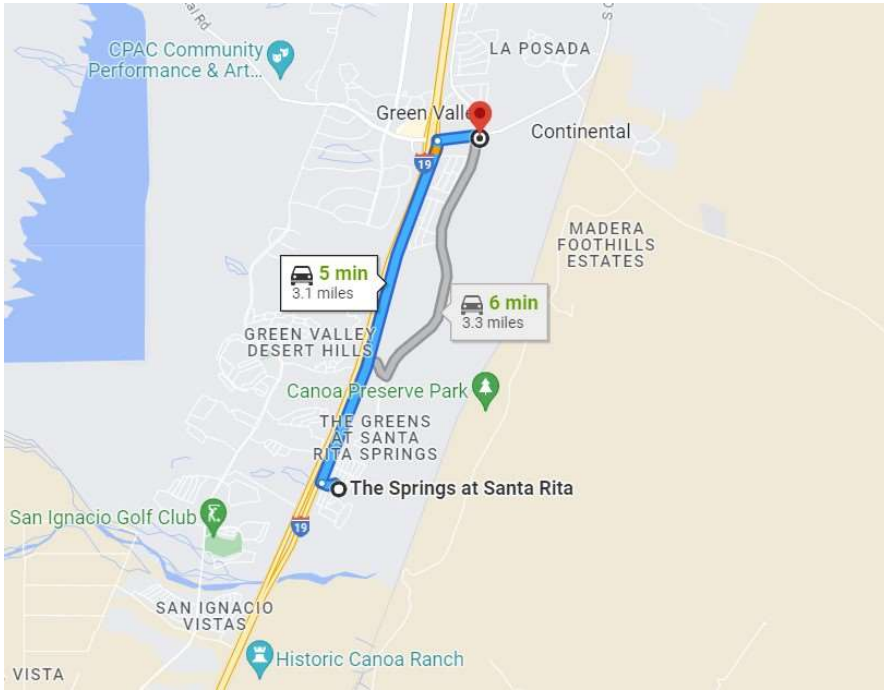
Community Investment:

- Annual community's minimum investment documentation; (number of dwelling unit's x current national volunteer rate = annual minimum community investment). \$31.80 (\$50,888.00). Totals and value based on University of Maryland School of Public Policy (2023 Mid-year Report)
- [Plans to achieve minimum investment.](#)

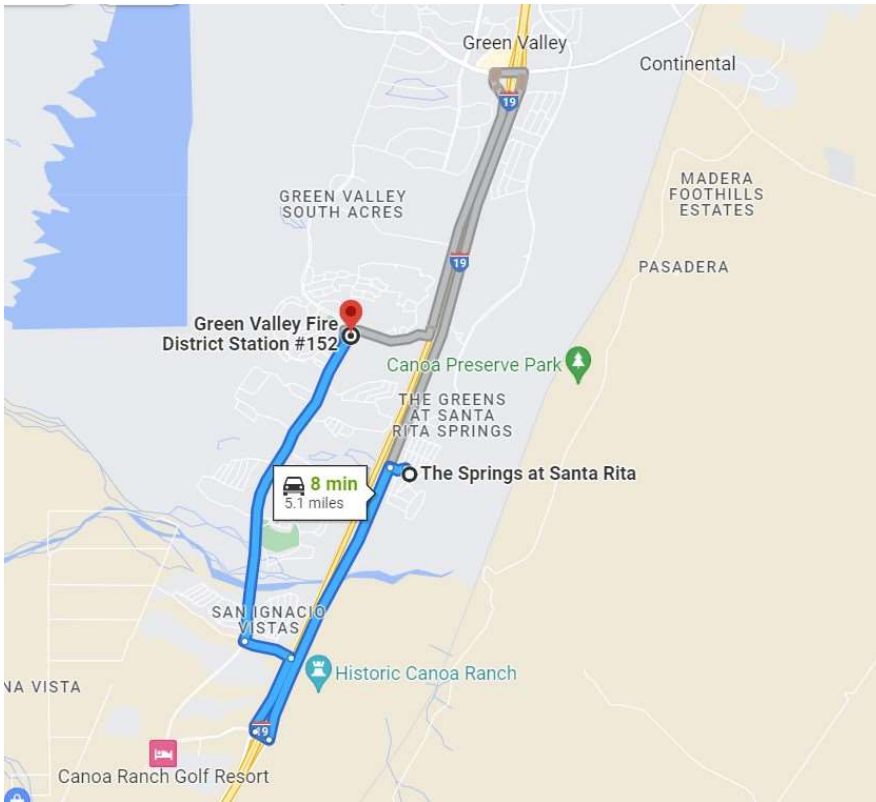
Community Firewise Day (1 paragraph)

- The Firewise Committee will create a Firewise Community Education and Workday in the Spring 2024.
- **3 drivable exits to the west, and 1 to the northeast.**
- **2 walkable exits to the east.**

Green Valley Fire District Station 153 - Location and Travel Time:



Green Valley Fire District Station 152 - Location and Travel Time



Fire Hydrant Locations:

